



Organiser

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Spain to become first European country to introduce Universal Basic Income



People play instruments as other dance on their balconies in support of the medical staff that are working on the COVID-19 virus outbreak in Barcelona

SPAIN is to become the first country to provide a universal basic income (UBI) to help families during the coronavirus pandemic, the government has said.

Minister for Economic Affairs Nadia Calvino said that UBI would be introduced “as soon as possible” and could be something that “stays forever, becomes a structural instrument, a permanent instrument.”

Spain would become the first country in Europe to implement such measures on a permanent basis.

UBI has become a hot topic during the Covid-19 outbreak, which has left many people unable to work due thousands of businesses having shut down as part of measures to slow the spread of the disease.

Its proponents say that it is a safety net, providing the whole population with a guaranteed level of income whether they are working or not. But its detractors insist that UBI is, in reality, a way to prop up the current system that favours big business, which would use it to suppress wages and boost profits.

Last week, Britain’s former work and pensions secretary Iain Duncan Smith insisted

that the payment of UBI, even in the short term during the pandemic, would be a “disincentive to work.”

Under a two-year trial of UBI in Finland that ended in February 2019, some out-of-work Finns received €560 (£490) a month.

Researchers found that those who took part in the scheme were happier and healthier, but UBI did not have any impact on their ability to find a job.

Spain is one of the countries hit worst by the Covid-19 outbreak, recording 136,675 cases and more than 13,000 deaths. About 83,000 people are currently sick.
